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Posegate: 'We Are Not Alone!'

JUNE 08TH 2011 BY NEWS

Posegate: 'We Are Not Alone!'

Greetings!

I just came back from a powerful and Christ-centered weekend at the Missouri Annual Conference of United Methodist Churches in Springfield, Missouri.

In his opening address, Bishop Robert Schnase, the leader of Missouri United Methodists, highlighted two videos of our church in Sikeston. The video clips focused on our growth in numbers and discipleship, and our outreach in the recent Hope Epidemic event. You all are doing great work, and it is a humble privilege to be your pastor! If you would like to view the "Awakening" video that details our Healthy Church Initiative.

New to First United Methodist Church in Sikeston? Thank you so much for looking us over. I want to invite you to a face-to-face time for us to get to know each other, and to have some question and answer time about our church and its mission. Please be my guest at LUNCH WITH THE PASTOR at 12:30 this Sunday, June 12, at Patrick's Deli on Malone Street! Lunch is on us!

I am proud of United Methodist commitment of funds and hands-on work as the city of Joplin, Missouri digs out of the recent killer tornado's damage. Google "Aaron Brown - Joplin Memorial Service" to hear a powerful statement of faith in the midst of tragedy, delivered by one of our United Methodist pastors in that city. As of last weekend, we have several volunteers for a Volunteers in Mission Workteam to Joplin. Rick Sherman has agreed to lead this team. He will work with the United Methodist Office of Creative

Ministries to determine a date.

Our neighbors in Morehouse continue to need the presence of Jesus' servants as they recover from recent flooding. Thank you to Becky Kuykendall and her team of volunteers who went to Morehouse last Thursday to distribute food! I'll be part of a flood recovery workteam going to Morehouse this Saturday, June 11. If you can help, meet us at the Family Life Center at 7:30 to fill out waiver forms; we'll plan to be in Morehouse around 8am and work until around 2pm. If anyone has drywall experience, that's a particular need, but all hands are needed.

Flood waters are working their way down the Missouri River again, and have displaced some people along the way. We will know in a couple of weeks how southeast Missouri will be affected. Depending on rainfall, we might need to be ready for a second round of flood relief. We are reassembling our flood relief team, under the leadership of Pastor Toni Dee. Toni's team will meet this Sunday night, June 12, from 5-6pm in the Grace Cafe at the south end of our facility.

This weekend is Confirmation Weekend at First United Methodist Church in Sikeston. Ten seventh-graders will publicly profess their faith in Jesus Christ and commit to being a part of our church's mission of leading people in new life with Jesus.

We'll also begin a new series titled, "Friend Request: Confirm/Not Now." We'll celebrate the life-changing challenge to each of us to be a friend, make a friend, and bring a friend to Christ! Speaking of friend requests,

In these days that are both exciting and challenging, I still return to the last lines of the Creed of the United Church of Canada: **In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God!** I believe this with a driving passion, and it is my deepest desire that everyone experience the truth of this statement. Thank you for being a church body committed to God's vision for all people.

Geoff Posegate

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In Flooded Bootheel: Don't Forget About Us

JUNE 08TH 2011 BY NEWS

In Flooded Bootheel: Don't Forget About Us

*By Allen Palmeri,
Special to the ShowMe Times*

BREWER LAKE, Mo.-Brandy Crisel stares into the slowly receding waters of the New Madrid Floodway, trying to see her childhood home. It might be one-quarter of a mile away.

For two solid weeks, the house built by her parents, Roy and Barbara Smith, has been engulfed by the Mississippi River floodwaters. The federal government's decision to blow a hole in the nearby Birds Point levee May 2 has assaulted dozens of houses and led Crisel and her parents, members of Wyatt Baptist Church in Wyatt, Mo., to trust even more in Jesus.

"I've said over and over again that God sees what we can't see," said Crisel, 36, who teaches the women's Sunday School class at the church. "We live in a bubble. We only see what's around us, but He sees the big picture."

"For whatever reason, I know it's going to be OK. I know that God's going to provide and that this was done for a reason. We may not understand it, but He knows. With Him, that's all we need. We've cried, of course, at the loss, but I know that He's in control of it."

She remembers her father working 60 hours a week and coming home on the weekends to tear down old houses for salvage material that the family would use to build their home.

"It started out with just one big concrete room, and we built it to a two-story house," Crisel said. "I watched my dad sweat, and I watched my dad ... one hammer and one man. Me and Mom have said that all our lives, but we couldn't hire anybody to come in and do it.

"We would hoist plywood up with a rope and nail it to the side of the house on the upstairs. There's just a lot of heart and a lot of sweat poured into this house that he built for my mom, so it is hard."

She is glad that her husband Ray and children have helped her take her parents into their Charleston, Mo., home. She said the house near Birds Point will be rebuilt, even if her parents need to start all over again with four concrete walls.

"They go paycheck to paycheck," she said. "They don't have anything to fall back on, so it's hard losing their home.

"Growing up, Dad would build us clubhouses in the trees. I remember Dad building the stairs, and it took him a while. Mom grew up really poor, and she just knew that rich people had big houses, two-story homes. It wasn't fancy. It wasn't top-notch. But it was her two-story house."

Many stories of resilience, pride, and faith can be found in Mississippi County as 2011 is forever linked with the monumental floods of 1927 and 1937, but it will not knock the residents off their land. The spillway is filled with steely resolve as farmers, pastors and workers wait for the water to go down.

"Don't forget about us," Dean Wallace, pastor of Wyatt Baptist Church, said.

Allen Palmeri is associate editor of The Pathway, newsjournal of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

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DAY 5: Hope Challenge

MAY 27TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

DAY 5: Hope Challenge

What a week! Congratulations — You made it to Day Five! How has this made you feel? Only one more day and our lives can return to normal. But for so many, normal is far worse than anything we've experienced this week. Hopefully this challenge opened your eyes to see the daily struggles that more than a billion people face every single day. You can help alleviate some of this suffering by bringing packets of vegetable seeds to worship this weekend. Did you know that one packet of seeds will save a child's life for 6 months! Over 18,000 children die of starvation each day. It's very rare to be able to say you saved a life. Bring those seeds in and make it happen! We'll also receive canned food items to support local flood victims.

I hear the local businesses have seen a spike in rice, beans, seeds, and canned food sales this week.

Scripture

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Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? (Isaiah 58: 6–7)

Reflection

Although there are hundreds of needs all around us, what is God calling you to do to make a difference in your community?

Pray

Pray for our Christian churches around the globe that are in the trenches serving their communities daily. These churches are addressing the needs of their communities holistically (spiritually, physically, and emotionally) and bringing hope. When local churches get it right, they are the hope of the world. There is no plan B.

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Hope Challenge: Day 4

MAY 26TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

Hope Challenge: Day 4

One more day to go! Are you still hanging with it? Have you been tempted? Don't feel bad if you've "cheated." The main purpose of this challenge has been to understand how difficult it is to live like over half the world. For me, this challenge has made me realize how much my life revolves around food. I'm determined to try and shift that focus.

Today let's think about those who are living in poverty around the world. When people are struggling against poverty - a safe shelter, a warm bed, and a pillow for their heads isn't something to take for granted. Recognize that 1.6 billion people in the world live in substandard housing and 100 million are homeless. A few years ago my brother and I visited Bolivia on an agricultural trip. It was unreal to see families sleeping on turn rows in fields. Here in America, 1 out of 6 Americans deal with this. When we lay down tonight (hungry and cranky) in our beds, let's think about those who sleep on dirt floors every night - without shelter, without a bed, without a pillow, without an iPhone, and without a tv to put them to sleep.

Scripture

My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest. (Isaiah 32:18)

Reflection

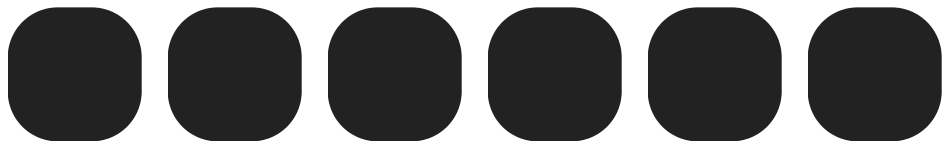
What insecure places do you have in your life? How can you turn those over to God, asking for His peace and security?

Pray

Pray for all the children in the world who do not have adequate housing and are forced to live in shacks that are unsafe and lack warm comfortable beds and protection during the night.

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Hope Epidemic - 5 Day Challenge - DAY 3

MAY 25TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

Hope Epidemic - 5 Day Challenge - DAY 3

*By Brad Aycok
Show-Me Times Reader Submitted*

5-DAY CHALLENGE - DAY 3

You're halfway there in your 5-Day Challenge! Isn't it exciting to look forward to another bowl of rice and beans and more tap water? Not sure how you're doing, but I've had headaches and have been a bit irritable. As you begin Day 3, let's be aware that one out of every eight people in the world lacks access to clean water - that's over one billion people. Children in many developing countries have to walk many miles to fill jugs with drinking water, often from disease-ridden sources. Today as we walk across the room to fill our cup with tap water, let's remember those children.

REMINDER:

Tonight at 6:30, we'll gather in the chapel for great music and prayer for our community, region, and world. Please come as you are and join us. If you'd like to come early, we'll be serving rice, beans, and broccoli in the Fellowship Hall beginning at 5:30 (drop-in).

Scripture

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. (Matthew 25:35–36)

Reflection

Take a moment to think of someone you know who seems to be carrying more than their share of a heavy burden. How can you make a difference in their life?

Pray

Pray for all the children around the world who are trapped in the cycle of poverty and are struggling simply to survive.

LAST UPDATED ON MAY 25TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

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